



# The Royal Standard

Winter 2017

WISCONSIN HOSTA SOCIETY  
EST. 1991

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello Everyone,

Boy, this "Spring in February" sure was nice. Hoping people stayed out of their gardens as they need to stay as cold as possible for at least another month. Usually I want to get in the gardens for cleanup around the first week in April. Last year on May 16 we had a freeze even down here in southern WI. Hoping this year will be better. If you want to put down a pre-emergent the time to do that is now. You want a nice rain after putting it down so it gets into the ground.

With the rains we had last fall, the hostas should be very nice this year for everyone. I look at where 'Empress Wu' is planted or 'Montana Aureomarginata' to see if they are pushing yet as they seem to be the first ones up in the spring. I love spring as things start to turn green and come alive.

The board has been working hard at getting things lined up for the coming year. I am so proud of them. Lots of great events being planned this year and proud to be a part of this great society. Hoping to see everyone at our events this year. Don't forget to like us on Facebook as the WISCONSIN HOSTA SOCIETY.

In Hostatality,  
Jeff, aka mrhosta



## 2017 CALENDAR WISCONSIN HOSTA SOCIETY

March 22 • **Membership Meeting**  
6:00 to 8:30PM, Olbrich Gardens  
Speaker: Rob Zimmer, award-winning nature and garden author.

April 12 • **Membership Meeting**  
6:00 to 8:30PM, Olbrich Gardens  
Speaker: Jeff Miller "Getting Your Garden Ready for the Summer." Also, "New Hostas for 2017"

June 4 • **WHS Hosta Auction**  
12:00 noon, Olbrich Gardens  
Auction of choice plant specimens.

July ?? • **Bus Tour to Indiana.**  
More information soon.

July 22 • **Leaf Competition at Land of the Giants Hosta Farm (LOTG).**  
6PM LOTG, Milton, WI  
WHS is catering the meal. Bring chairs and your best hosta leaves.

August 5 • **WHS Summer Potluck Picnic and Garden Tours.**  
Host: Marla Robinson. More info later.

August 17 • **Rotary Gardens Tour**  
6PM, Janesville Rotary Gardens, led by Rotary Gardens Director Mark Dwyer

September 13 • **Membership Meeting**  
6-8:30PM, Olbrich Gardens  
"Game Night"

October 11 • **Membership Meeting**  
6-8:30PM, Olbrich Gardens  
Speaker: Kathy Sisson- hybridizer, Master Hosta Show Judge from Avon, CT.

October 14 • **Bonfire at LOTG Hosta Farm, aka "Phil-O's Giant Marshmallow Roast"**  
3PM LOTG, Milton, WI  
WHS is catering dinner. Bring chairs!

November 4 • **WHS Harvest Party**  
1:00-4PM, Firefly Coffeehouse, Oregon, WI.  
Fun, food and games to finish the season!

# WHS BOOTH AT GARDEN EXPO 2017

FEBRUARY 10-12, 2017

Garden Expo 2017 was a huge success. We sold a total of 106 Hostas over the 3-day event. We also had 45 new members sign up to join our wonderful club along with a total of 19 renewals. We had many compliments throughout the weekend on how outstanding our booth looked. It was nice having the extra booth space this year so we could spread things out. A "BIG" thank you goes out to everyone who volunteered to help with the booth from setting up, to working the booth, and tearing down. If it wasn't for everyone's hard work and dedication we would not have been as successful as we were.

Thanks again to everyone.

Bob and Dawn Geske



# I LOVE THOSE MINIS!

BY JOE HABER, CENTERPORT, NY

*(This article first appeared in the Tri-State Tribune)*

Gardening on a small piece of property with a steep hillside in my backyard, I must confess that mini and small hostas have become my favorites. Obviously I'm not alone since the American Hosta Society decided to conduct a separate popularity poll for minis in addition to their poll of the most popular standard varieties. Also, I have noticed that articles on this subject and photos are appearing in The Hosta Journal more frequently in recent editions.

These little guys look great in containers and my favorite containers are troughs. Troughs can be filled with many different plants including dwarf conifers, small succulents and of course, mini hostas.

Making hypertufa troughs is not difficult and can be a good winter pastime as you wait for your hostas to start emerging in the spring. There are several recipes for hypertufa mixtures. The main ingredients are portland cement, peat moss and perlite – all readily available in local home improvement centers. They can be made using molds that are rectangular, round, etc., or even free shaped. Whatever shape you choose, the final product can really dress up a patio.

I grow mini and small hostas in a variety of containers and even have 'Lemon Lime' growing in a tree stump. It has been there for eight years. In most of my containers I mix hostas with companions like Ajuga 'Metallica Crispa', Tatting Fern (Athyrium

Frizellae), and even small annuals. Some mini hosta favorites that I grow in our rock garden are; 'Pandora's Box', 'Surprised By Joy', 'Medusa', 'Teenyweeny Bikini', 'Blue Mouse Ears', 'Green Eyes', 'Crepe Soul', 'Chickadee', 'Kinboten', and 'Thumbnail', to name a few. Like peanuts, you can't have just one.

Slugs are a bigger problem for small hostas than large ones. My way of combating the "damn slug" is by spreading a topping that forms a barrier. My formula for this very successful topping is a mixture of ground egg shells, ground sea shells, and chicken grit. An occasional sprinkling of Sluggo also helps.

In closing I will quote Bob Solberg: "Miniature hostas are cute, little babies that will grow in a thimble. They often run in herds through rock gardens, around ponds, or along the edge of a path. Minis are especially happy in containers, strawberry pots, troughs, or even whiskey barrels. Hundreds can live comfortably along a driveway. Just give them water."



## WHS Board Members

**Jeff Miller**  
President  
[MrHosta@charter.net](mailto:MrHosta@charter.net)

**Phil Timm**  
Vice President &  
Program Chair  
[hostamanphil@yahoo.com](mailto:hostamanphil@yahoo.com)

**Marlene Rosenberg**  
Secretary  
[uniquelyhostas@yahoo.com](mailto:uniquelyhostas@yahoo.com)

**Marla Robinson**  
Treasurer & Membership  
[j\\_robinson@charter.net](mailto:j_robinson@charter.net)

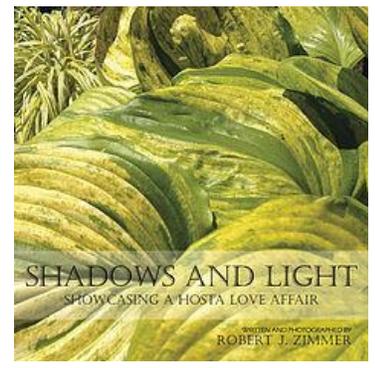
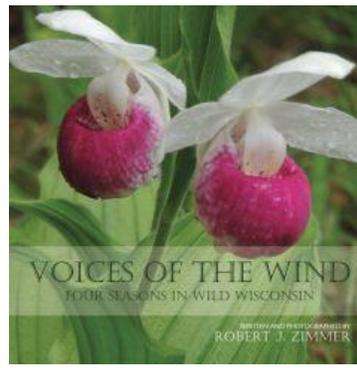
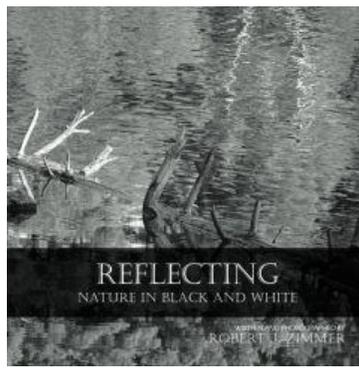
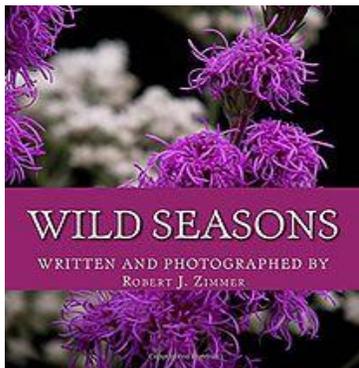
**Sandy O'Malley**  
Member-at-Large  
[4gardenstuff@gmail.com](mailto:4gardenstuff@gmail.com)

## SPEAKER BACKGROUND

### MARCH 22 MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Rob Zimmer is an award-winning nature and garden author, columnist, and radio host. Zimmer has written for many daily newspapers throughout Wisconsin and his columns appear weekly in the Wisconsin State Farmer. He has authored the following books: *Voices of the Wind: Four Seasons in Wild Wisconsin*; *Wild Seasons: The Beauty of Native Wildflowers*; *Shadows and Light: Showcasing a Hosta Love Affair*; and *Reflecting: Nature in Black and White*.

Rob's features and photographs have also appeared in a number of magazines, including Wisconsin Gardening, Wisconsin Sportsman, Wisconsin Natural Resources, Birders World, Wildlife Conservation, and Country Journal. Rob also hosts the radio program "Outdoors with Rob Zimmer" every Saturday on WHBY radio. Find him online at [www.robzimmeroutdoors.com](http://www.robzimmeroutdoors.com). You can also find him at our March 22 WHS meeting, along with an opportunity to purchase his books!



## 2017 HOSTA OF THE YEAR

### 'BROTHER STEFAN'



Photo by Olga Petryszyn.

Each year the American Hosta Growers Association (AHGA) selects a new addition for their "Hosta of the Year" list. Winners are chosen for their ability to grow well in all regions of the country, plus being easily available at a moderate cost. For 2017, AHGA selected 'Brother Stefan,' a wonderful introduction from Olga Petryszyn. Classified as a medium-sized plant, 'Brother Stefan' has large, heavily corrugated gold leaves with a wide dark green margin. Early summer brings near-white flowers, and with age it will form an impressive clump.

For past Hosta of the Year winners, go to [www.hostagrowers.org](http://www.hostagrowers.org).

# WHS 2016 FINANCIAL REPORT

**\$12,731.91 Beginning Balance December 31, 2015**

\$ 1,169.00	Income Membership Dues
\$ 1,265.00	Income Garden Expo Hostas
\$ 1,165.30	Income June Hosta Sale
\$ 1,156.00	Income June Hosta Auction
\$ 764.00	Income Picnic Auction Hostas
\$ 970.00	Income Bus Trip/Raffle tickets
\$ 441.12	Income Hosta Signs/Stakes

**\$ 6,930.42 Total Income**

( 528.00)	Expenses Garden Expo Hostas
( 966.75)	Expenses Garden Expo 2016/2017
( 42.99)	Expenses Hosting/Website Fees
( 1,577.83)	Expenses & Food at Picnic, Meetings, Leaf show
( 960.57)	Expenses Bus Trip
( 441.03)	Expenses Hosta Signs/Stakes
( 69.09)	Expenses Misc Office/Filing Fees/Postage
( 255.00)	Expenses Insurance
( 1,200.00)	Expenses Donations
( 220.00)	Expenses Speaker/Olbrich Botanical Gardens
( 278.00)	Expenses Harvest Party
( 1,800.00)	Expenses H. Philo Done It

**( 8,339.26) Total Expenses**

**\$11,323.26 Ending Balance December 31, 2016 Bank Statement**

— Respectively submitted  
Treasurer Marla Robinson



# A PRIMER ON THE TRAITS OF HOSTA SPECIES

BY BILL MEYER

*(Editor's Note: The following discussion by Bill Meyer deals with traits of individual hosta species that are especially noteworthy with respect to hybridizing. Bill sent it through HostaPix when someone asked for help in looking for traits when crossing hostas. It is reprinted with Bill's permission.)*

**Montanas** come in two basic types such as those features seen in 'On Stage' and the type seen in 'Frosted Jade'. The first type is a very common weed in Japan and somewhat non-descript in its green form. Some think it as a parent of a no longer accepted species like Fortunei and Undulata. Vigor is perhaps its best trait. Flowering can also be a strong point with tightly-packed racemes and colored bracts. The second type (**Macrophylla**) is a prime contributor to large leaf sizes with high vein counts. Breeders like Olga Petrysyn use it in their programs for this reason mainly.

**Sieboldianas** have very strong traits and are the source of two important traits---blue color and lutescence. Additionally they contribute good substance, rounded leaves, and rugosity. It's the second-most used species in hybridizing.

**Ventricosa** has not been used too much in crosses because it is very difficult to use as a pod parent. The strongest trait it contributes is the typical bell-shaped flowers, but lately through the work of Mary Chastain, it is showing really dark greens.

**Longipes** is a plant only coming into its own recently in hybridizing. It has an interesting collection of traits to contribute, including glaucous tops and white backs, highly glossy tops, very attractive flowering, pie-crusting, red petioles, and more.

**Sieboldii** is the most-used species in hybridizing. It was the original source for variegation in hosta ('Beatrice') so it was used very extensively in the last thirty years. Positive traits include fast strong growth, high fertility and high seed/pod counts even several generations away, red petioles, and excellent compatibility with other species. Negative traits are also strong and include poor substance and poor wax finishes on the leaves.

**Hypoleuca** adds some surprising traits. Large leaf size is the most interesting one, but others include attractive flowering, acceptance of blue and lutescent gold coloring, and white leaf backs, as well as strong vigor (strange as that seems).

**Kikutii** mainly contributes its distinctive leaf shape and strong vein structure, but is also good for flowering. Negative would be slow growth.

**Pycnophylla** has many good traits to add which are similar to longipes. Except for glossy waxes, the list of positive traits is similar: white backs, red petioles, piecrusting, acceptance of blue and lutescent gold coloring, good flowers. Negative would be slow growth (most of the time) and slow production of leaves/divisions, and a strong tendency toward medium size.

**Venusta's** primary use is for small size, and it has little else going for it.

**Capitata** can contribute colored bracts and satiny waxes, and is a very early bloomer.

**Nakaiana** is good for vigor, small size, high numbers of leaves/divisions, and good fertility. Negative is that it tends to make plants look dull and ordinary. A good example would be 'Blue Cadet'.

*Continued, Page 7*

## A PRIMER ON THE TRAITS OF HOSTA SPECIES

**Yingeri** and **laevigata** contribute similar traits. Good waxes in the shiny and satiny ranges, some good red coloring (tendency to fade early though), vigor and fertility in later generations. Negatives would be not accepting glaucous waxes, so blues are nearly impossible.

**Nigrescens** can contribute upright plant form, red petioles, strongly upright scapes, and glaucous waxes. Negative would be slow growth and fertility problems in later generations.

**Plantaginea** positives---fragrance, vigor and sun-resistance. Negatives---serious fertility problems (can be very difficult to build breeding lines), and difficulty with glaucous waxes.

Leaf size is somewhat variable with most species and tends to work pretty much the way you'd expect. Extremely large or extremely small leaves tend to be hard to come by. Piecrusting does not seem to be species-related but good form in a piecrust leaf would require a strong vein structure.

Variegation will come in one of two ways --- 1. using a streaked pod parent will produce up to 70% (even higher percentages have been reported) streaked seedlings, so this gives the best results, or 2. growing large numbers of seedlings from non-streaked parents will occasionally yield a streaked seedling ('Dorothy Benedict' was created this way), but this is unreliable. Streaking seems to behave the same way with all species with regards to passing the trait on to the next generation. Most species have yielded streaked forms by now.

When trying to determine the species involved in a cross, relative bloom time can help, because crosses always bloom in-between the bloom times of their parents. Bloom dates can vary from year to year because of weather conditions, so they are best considered as periods defined by the species rather than calendar dates. For example, the first period would be sieboldiana, montana, and capitata bloom time, and the last would be longipes and kikutii bloom time.

This is just a quick thumbnail sketch of the information that's there, and others could add to it from their own observations. It would take a small book to really give a clear picture of all that's involved. Because it's so complex, there are vast possibilities in terms of different-looking plants to come. This gives someone a basic idea, but breeding will accentuate some traits and isolate others. Mixing three and four species into a plant will probably also make for some unusual results. Bloom time is very important in crossing, but not a solid barrier. Even this can be manipulated by starting plants early, or saving pollen from the past season. Fertility problems can cause a dead end as well, so more than one plant from a cross should be grown on.

P.S. - The actual number of species is a frequent source of debate. DNA testing hopefully will resolve this.



## OTHER 2017 HOSTA EVENTS OF INTEREST

### **Great Lakes Region - Hosta College**

March 17-18, 2017

Piqua, OH

<http://www.ihostohio.org/portal/glhc/>

### **American Hosta Society Convention**

June 7-10, 2017

Indianapolis, IN

<http://www.americanhostasociety.org/> or

<https://www.indyhosta2017.com/>

### **Midwest Regional Hosta Convention**

June 22-24, 2017

Kansas City, KS

<http://www.midwesthostasociety.org/index.shtml>



## WHS NEW MEMBERS

Thanks for joining WHS at Garden Expo...Welcome!

Barbara Kane Anderson  
Catherine V. Anderson  
Paula Bauch  
Eugenia Beecher  
Mary Benes  
Jim Boda  
Patricia Byrne  
Abigail Christiansen  
John A. Christiansen  
Jan Ciotti  
Susan Danielson  
JoAnn DeMuth

Mark Dwyer  
Kathleen Folz  
Audrey Fusek  
Ben Futa  
Betty Henry  
Susie Herlache  
Marie Hoffman  
Kris Holdorf  
Margaret Immerfall  
Bonnie Kennedy  
Irene Klingemann  
Peter Krejci

Julie Kubicek  
Jim Liebert  
Sylvia & Vern Lowell  
Judith Magnus  
Crystal Majerus  
Chris Maloney  
Karen Mezera  
Susan Phillips  
Heather Rogers  
Angela & Greg Rice  
Judy Schaefer & David Kemper  
Barbara Seth

Bob Sjostrum  
Donna Smith  
Valerie Stabenow  
Linda Stuesser  
Diane Wachorf  
Connie Waggaman  
Nancy Wanless  
Tim Watkins  
Matthew & Julie Zimmerman

# HOSTA FLOWERS

I might be in the minority, but I look forward to my hosta flowers each summer! Once the explosion of lush growth and spring bloomers is over, the hostas fill that gap during the heat of summer when everything is hot and tired (including me!). They make wonderful cut flowers and last forever in a vase. The fragrant varieties are a delightful bonus too. Since we are all currently starved for flowers and green gardens, I figured I'd offer up a few photos of my favorites to get us through these next few months. Enjoy!

—Windi Fourdraine



H. 'Summer Breeze'



An unknown small beauty in the Kleinheinz gardens.



Old favorite *H. plantaginea*



Another unknown in Georgia's gardens.



H. 'Victory'



H. 'Aphrodite' finally opened on September 1, 2016.



H. 'Spritzer' and friend...made ya look!



H. 'Ming Treasure'



H. 'Luna Moth'



H. 'Guacamole'



H. 'Frosted Margarita'



Shining white flowers on a H. 'Fire and Ice' green sport.



H. *ventricosa* 'Aureomarginata' blooming Oct. 29!



H. 'Stained Glass'



H. 'Glory' and campanula...gotcha!

Corrections? Comments? Suggestions? Contact Newsletter Editor Windi Fourdraine at [twotxaggies@frontier.com](mailto:twotxaggies@frontier.com)



*"Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies a miracle ... a seed waiting to sprout, a bulb opening to the light, a bud straining to unfurl. And the anticipation nurtures our dream."* -- Barbara Winkler